

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Federal Agency Name: Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water, Assessment and Watershed Protection Division

Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2006 Assessment and Watershed Protection Program Grants (AWPPGs)

Announcement Type: Request for Proposals

Catalog of Domestic Assistance Number: 66.480

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-OW-OWOW-06-05

Dates: Hard copy proposals must be received by EPA (see Section VII of this RFP) by **5:30 P.M. EDT Tuesday, August 15, 2006**, or by electronic submission through Grants.gov by **11:59 P.M. EDT Tuesday, August 15, 2006**. Late proposals will not be considered for funding. Questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified in Section VII before **Friday, August 4, 2006** and written responses will be posted on EPA's website at:

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/funding/rfp.html>.

If selected, applicant(s) will be invited to submit a complete application package prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10) that will be due 21 calendar days after being notified. Required forms and instructions for preparing and submitting the completed application will be provided at that time.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is accepting proposals from eligible applicants to conduct projects that promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution. The goals of this announcement include supporting a watershed approach to better address water quality problems in the U.S. and building the capacity of all levels of government to develop and implement effective, comprehensive programs for watershed protection, restoration, and management. These are tied into Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality, Sub-Objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis of the EPA Strategic Plan (available at <http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm>), which includes restoring and maintaining watersheds and their aquatic ecosystems and oceans in order to protect human health, support economic and recreational activities, and provide healthy habitat for fish, plants, and wildlife. States and local governments, Federally recognized Indian Tribes, territories and possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), interstate agencies or intertribal consortia, public or private non-profit, non-governmental institutions, and individuals are eligible to apply. This announcement describes the selection and award process for eligible applicants interested in applying for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 Assessment and Watershed Protection Program Grants (AWPPGs). The total amount of funding available under this announcement is approximately \$1,150,000.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objectives

This announcement is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to develop effective and comprehensive programs for watershed protection, restoration, and management. The projects that eligible applicants can undertake are diverse. In the past, award recipients have pursued a wide range of activities such as developing management

tools, advancing scientific and technical tools for protecting watershed health, improving availability of data and information about watersheds, and training watershed managers and the public about watershed management.

The statutory authority for AWPPGs is Section 104(b)(3) of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA restricts the use of these assistance agreements to the following: conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution. Demonstrations must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, and it is encouraged that the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not considered a demonstration project. Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement.

All projects funded through AWPPGs must contribute to the overall development and improvement of watershed programs. AWPPG funds may not be used solely for the operational support of specific watershed projects (e.g., support for the implementation of individual watershed projects, the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for specific waterbodies, or for in-depth monitoring for individual waterbodies).

B. National Priorities

Proposals to fund projects under this announcement must address one of the specific project topic areas listed under one of the three national priorities identified below: Watershed/TMDL Program; Nonpoint Source Program; and Monitoring and Assessment Program. While applicants can submit different proposals for different project topic areas; each proposal can only address one project topic area.

1. Watershed/TMDL Program National Priority

The Watershed/TMDL program national priority focuses on advancing the science of TMDL development through technical training, technology transfer, and enhancement of TMDL production efficiencies. It is anticipated that approximately \$350,000 is available to fund an estimated three to seven projects to support this national priority. EPA is soliciting proposals for the following specific project topic areas under this national priority: Assessment and TMDL Workshops; Impaired Waters Recovery and Results Analysis; and Tools, Incentives, and Products Training for the Watershed Approach.

a. Assessment and TMDL Workshops

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that provide logistical and technical support for the delivery of workshops to build the capacity of State, local, regional, and Tribal officials to support achievement of assessment and TMDL program strategic

objectives. The goal of the workshops is to build on lessons learned and advance the program nationally to ensure implementation through innovation, adaptive watershed management, and cooperative conservation.

The workshops should cover technical, scientific and programmatic issues covering various elements of the TMDL program including water quality assessment, modeling, nonpoint source loading, stormwater and other wet weather sources, and other pollutant specific TMDL developmental and implementation issues. The target audience is expected to include State, local, regional, and Tribal officials, stakeholders, and national experts. It is anticipated that recipients would develop agendas and provide participants with materials. Possible workshop topics/sessions include the following:

- Listing approaches;
- Development of successful or innovative TMDLs (including third-party TMDLs);
- Integration of monitoring, water quality standards, and/or permit programs;
- Involvement of local watershed organization expertise;
- Planning for program implementation activities; and
- Alternatives to TMDLs (including analysis of potential impairment types, innovative approaches to meeting water quality standards in a reasonable period of time, and cost benefit information).

The workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement with a one-year project period for a recipient to conduct one to two workshops under this topic area.

EPA anticipates funding one to two cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for a total available of approximately \$80,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

b. Impaired Waters Recovery and Results Analysis

Watershed plans and restoration projects have increased markedly in recent years and nearly 20,000 TMDLs have now been completed. Improved understanding of demonstrably successful approaches would help the success rates of all such watershed and water quality programs. EPA is soliciting proposals for results analysis projects designed to improve the understanding of factors underlying successful water quality improvement efforts. In this case, “results analysis” refers to the study of impaired waters regaining a desired level of functional condition, such as re-attaining a water quality standard or restoring a desired fish population.

EPA will consider proposals concerning results analysis of the restoration of rivers, streams, or lakes, and any types of pollutants in these waters. Results analysis projects may involve one or more of the following: Identifying and geo-referencing restoration projects that have demonstrated results;

- Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to crosswalk these restored or improving waters with other geographic factors that may help explain the demonstrated results;

- Identifying the likely driving factors of success or failure;
- Linking findings to program characteristics so they may be applied in program improvements; and
- Developing documents and/or databases suitable for access by State, Tribal, local, and regional watershed or water quality program managers.

EPA anticipates funding one to two cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for a total available of approximately \$80,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

Note: EPA will not consider proposals for results analysis projects focused on a single impaired water's recovery. Proposals that address analysis of multiple impaired waters and broader (e.g., statewide or larger) geographic coverage are encouraged.

c. Tools, Incentives, and Products Training for the Watershed Approach

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that assist States, Tribes, local governments, and watershed practitioners in the development and implementation of effective watershed plans that strategically address priority water resource goals. EPA is also soliciting proposals for training, demonstrations, award programs/other incentives, and dissemination of existing tools, products and information that support integrative watershed planning to improve water quality, including source water protection. The target audience is expected to include States, Tribes, local governments, and watershed practitioners. Trainings and demonstrations do not need to be stand alone, but can be held in conjunction with other trainings, demonstrations, workshops or similar events already planned by other organizations. Potential projects include trainings, workshops, or demonstrations that are focused on existing tools and products that:

- Assist in identifying, assessing, and prioritizing water quality problems in watersheds;
- Assist in appropriate landscape analysis and monitoring techniques, including database use;
- Provide decision support systems for interaction with and between these tools in an integrated manner; and
- Expand the audience for, and recognition of, effective water quality improvement activities (e.g., an award program/other incentives for water quality trading).

EPA anticipates funding one to three cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for a total available of approximately \$190,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

2. Nonpoint Source Program National Priority

The nonpoint source program national priority focuses on enhancing program effectiveness through innovative community outreach projects, educational materials, curriculum design, and awareness programs, as well as supporting selected nonpoint

source control demonstration projects. It is anticipated that approximately \$600,000 is available to fund an estimated six to fourteen projects to support this national priority. EPA is soliciting proposals for the following specific project topic areas under this national priority: Tools and Web-Based Decision Support Systems for Watershed Planning; Low Impact Development, Sustainable Development, and Redevelopment Practices to Protect and Restore Water Resources; Demonstrations and Research to Promote Agricultural Drainage Water Management Practices; Validation of Best Management Practices for Nutrient Pollution Reduction; and a Conference to Promote Clean Lakes.

a. Tools and Web-Based Decision Support Systems for Watershed Planning

This project topic area involves taking proven technical tools for watershed planning and upgrading or linking them in order to improve their efficiency, applicability, and usability for watershed managers. EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that will provide technical guidance to States, Tribes, local governments, and watershed practitioners on landscape analysis, water quality assessment tools (e.g. models), databases, and monitoring techniques for developing and implementing watershed plans that address nonpoint sources of pollution. EPA is soliciting proposals for the refinement of such tools and for State, local, and regional computerized decision support systems which provide interaction with and between these tools in an integrated manner.

Tools for assessing water quality, such as data analysis tools, digital mapping, and models, need to be compatible with available databases. Similarly, landscape assessment tools should work efficiently with water quality, habitat, and other databases to help make land treatment decisions at the small watershed scale. It is anticipated that tools developed will be nonproprietary modeling and data management tools that would be used by watershed planners to develop plans and projects designed to attain State water quality standards. It is also anticipated that the tools developed would be made available to the public through websites, Compact Discs (CDs), and/or publications.

EPA anticipates funding one to two cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for a total available of approximately \$120,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

b. Low Impact Development (LID), Sustainable Development, and Redevelopment Practices to Protect and Restore Water Resources

This project topic area involves supporting community sustainability and “greener approaches” to urban and neighborhood design and promoting innovation that results in more sustainable and cost-effective water resources management.

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects to promote a national dialogue on LID, sustainable development, and redevelopment practices to protect water resources, advance increased understanding of these issues, and promote the development of programs that embody these concepts. Potential projects include the following:

- Development of LID guidelines, specifications, methodologies or principles to use in analyzing, designing and mitigating the impacts of infill development and property expansions on site hydrology (water balance) and pollutant runoff loadings. Development of feedback methodologies to test and evaluate these tools.
- Development of programmatic means to increase the implementation of LID strategies and practices or decentralized approaches to managing stormwater. These institutional approaches or methods could be part of an overall strategy to develop more sustainable runoff management systems. Projects could include planning and targeting procedures, the development of Department of Transportation (DOT) LID design specifications or requirements for LID projects for use at the State or local level, and reports or analyses regarding the performance and cost of the LID practices or systems.
- Development of site sustainability metrics or other methodologies to be used in the design and evaluation of sustainable landscapes and site designs to protect water resources. Identification or development of methods or principles aimed at reducing the water quality and quantity impacts of land development practices through design. Development of information, analyses and reports on the costs, effectiveness and sustainability of individual practices, systems, or technologies, and the analyses of market forces that may drive acceptance and adoption of these techniques.
- Surveys that result in developing case study summaries from reports or analyses that document or compare the costs and/or performance of decentralized/LID approaches versus conventional wastewater, stormwater, and drinking water treatment and protection approaches. Such reports or analyses could also be focused on analysis of the benefits of comprehensively managing water, wastewater, and stormwater management in an integrated fashion or other issues such as the identification of barriers to the implementation of these approaches or ways to promote more widespread adoption of these approaches.

EPA anticipates funding one to three cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for a total available of approximately \$150,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

c. Demonstrations and Research to Promote Agricultural Drainage Water Management Practices

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that use scientific and technical information as a basis for demonstrating and researching the effectiveness of agricultural drainage water management practices and systems to reduce nonpoint source nutrient pollution, to develop watershed plans, and to implement water quality trading programs. Projects can include in-field demonstrations as well as model enhancements for a better understanding of the watershed-scale effects of implementing drainage water management practices. Model enhancements should make the existing water quality models and drainage water management models more available for general use. Projects can also include coordinating existing technical, educational, and extension materials on

the design, implementation, and operation of drainage water management systems that support the system's success and sustainability.

EPA anticipates funding one to two cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for a total available of approximately \$70,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

d. Validation of Best Management Practices for Nutrient Pollution Reduction

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that will validate the effectiveness of specific best management practices (BMPs) for nonpoint source nutrient pollution reduction. Projects that involve the following priorities are encouraged:

- Validation of constructed wetlands at the confluence of tile drains to include measurements of phosphorus reductions in addition to nitrogen reductions;
- Validation of point to nonpoint source trading ratios through studies that look at nutrient transformations that occur from edge of field to edge of waterbody in addition to in-waterbody nutrient cycling and transformations;
- Validation of BMP performance under varying weather patterns, including extreme flooding events and drought conditions;
- Identification of physical, geological, and biological conditions for optimal riparian buffer performance for pollution reduction;
- Determination of the integrity of wetland structure and function under stress from excess stormwater/agricultural runoff;
- Validation of constructed wetlands as a BMP for nutrient reduction; and
- Validation of wetland restoration as a BMP for nutrient reduction.

EPA will also consider proposals that provide validation for other nutrient pollution reduction BMPs that will assist States, Tribes, and territories in achieving their water quality goals through improved watershed planning.

EPA anticipates funding two to six cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for a total available of approximately \$200,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

e. Conference to Promote Clean Lakes

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that provide logistical and technical support for the delivery of a national conference in calendar year 2007 to promote training, coordination, and acceleration of research on lakes. Proposals to convene a national conference of State lake quality management agencies, together with regional and local programs that these State programs serve, that include the following goals are encouraged:

- Exploring effective and efficient approaches to partnerships in lake and watershed management; and
- Transferring/sharing information among State lake managers and others on effective approaches for managing lakes and reservoirs.

The target audience for the conference is expected to include State, local, regional, and Tribal officials, stakeholders, and national lake experts. It is anticipated that the recipient will develop an agenda and provide participants with conference materials. EPA encourages proposals that include possible agenda topics such as: addressing technical, scientific and programmatic issues related to resolving lake use conflicts, especially at the local level; exploring updates on the Survey of the Nation's Lakes to provide a forum for States to discuss any issues they have with the project; providing updates on other national lakes-related projects such as the Fish Tissue Study; developing nutrient criteria for lakes; and other emerging topics of importance to State lake managers and others.

EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement for a total available of up to approximately \$60,000, with a planned one-year project period for a recipient to conduct one conference under this topic area, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project.

3. Monitoring and Assessment Program National Priority

The monitoring and assessment national priority supports monitoring and assessment initiatives for enhancing State, Tribal, local, and citizen efforts to increase awareness of water quality conditions and to promote innovative strategies and approaches for better assessment of the nation's water quality. It is anticipated that approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000 is available to fund an estimated four to five projects under this national priority. EPA is soliciting proposals for the following specific project topic areas under this national priority: Application of Probability Survey Data and a Newsletter for Volunteer Monitoring.

a. Application of Probability Survey Data

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that demonstrate that the integration of probability surveys with other types of monitoring can provide effective and cost-efficient water data and information for States and other entities to use in implementing their CWA programs (e.g., setting of State water quality standards, criteria development, and State 305(b) and 303(d) water quality assessments). Probability surveys use a randomized sample design where a relatively small, but unbiased set of sites can be sampled to represent the condition of the entire water resource under investigation. Probability surveys also allow State, regional, interstate, and local resource managers to track changes in the overall condition of the resource over time.

Numerous States conduct probability surveys as a part of their monitoring programs. Several national and regional data sets generated from probability surveys are currently available. These national and regional data sets include the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP) and the Regional Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (REMAP) studies, New England Wadeable Streams Survey, the Wadeable Streams Assessment, the Lake Fish Tissue Assessment, and the National Coastal Assessment.

EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that demonstrate that the integration of probability surveys with other types of monitoring can provide effective and cost-efficient water data and information for States and other entities to use in implementing the following water quality management aspects of a CWA program:

- Developing or revising water quality criteria or water quality standards on a State or regional level.
- Developing predictive tools based on relationships between landscape characteristics and water quality, physical habitat, and/or ecological condition to help prioritize vulnerable waters for follow-up monitoring.
- Establishing a link between impaired waters and ecological condition to help direct targeted monitoring to waterbodies likely to be impaired.

Other analytical approaches that link a probability dataset to programs that support multiple CWA activities may also be proposed. Successful proposals will demonstrate, or develop and apply, methods that will help States use the results generated from these surveys to support the additional water quality management activities. These projects should focus on at least State-scale applications of probability datasets.

EPA anticipates funding up to an estimated four cooperative agreements (each with a planned one-year project period) under this specific project topic area for approximately \$100,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the projects.

b. Newsletter for Volunteer Monitoring

EPA is soliciting proposals to produce a newsletter advancing innovations and transferring information on the latest developments in volunteer monitoring of water quality. The newsletter is intended to collect and make available to States, watershed practitioners, and other interested entities information on the latest research, pilot projects, training, experiments, surveys, and demonstration projects related to volunteer monitoring of water quality. The newsletter must be national in scope, must be able to be electronically distributed to at least 10,000 – 15,000 subscribers, and should be produced at least two times a year. In-depth articles on monitoring methods, volunteer monitoring program development and maintenance, and research in the field are encouraged. Proposals should include production, editing, and distribution activities of this newsletter. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement with up to a three-year project period under this topic area. The Agency anticipates that the award will be in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project.

C. EPA's Strategic Plan and Anticipated Environmental Results

The goals of the AWPPGs include supporting a watershed approach to better address water quality problems in the U.S. and building the capacity of all levels of government to develop and implement effective, comprehensive programs for watershed protection, restoration, and management. These priorities support Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality, Sub-Objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis of the EPA Strategic Plan (available at

<http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm>), which includes restoring and maintaining watersheds and their aquatic ecosystems and oceans in order to protect human health, support economic and recreational activities, and provide healthy habitat for fish, plants, and wildlife. All proposed projects must address these priorities and include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs, and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that demonstrate how the project will contribute to the overall development and improvement of watershed programs.

Expected environmental outputs (or deliverables) refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

Examples of anticipated environmental outputs from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- Workshops on innovative assessment and modeling methodologies for TMDL development;
- New tools and products for assisting States in setting water quality priorities and conducting integrated monitoring;
- A training handbook on LID and redevelopment practices;
- Demonstrations and research projects to assess the effectiveness of agricultural drainage water management practices and systems;
- A national conference to promote training, coordination, and acceleration of research on lakes; and
- A volunteer monitoring newsletter to inform subscribers on the latest innovations in monitoring techniques, new research, and information transfer.

Environmental outcomes are the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective, and are used as a way to gauge a project's performance and take the form of output measures and outcome measures. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature. For instance, there is great need to improve the knowledge and decision-making ability, with respect to environmental issues, of local and State officials who are in the position of creating laws, ordinances, permits, etc. In this context, certain efforts designed to improve decision-making and behavioral changes can be viewed as environmental outcomes (results) if the grantee can show or measure the improvement in the knowledge of decision-makers who are in the position to create environmental institutional changes that are necessary to restore or protect the environment. In such instances, outcomes are not measured typically by environmental or water quality indicators, but rather by the institutional indicators that lead to the adoption and application of laws and regulations and the active management of programs necessary to provide environmental protection.

Outcomes must be quantitative and may not necessarily be achieved within an assistance agreement funding period. Outcomes may be short term (changes in learning, knowledge, attitude, skills), intermediate (changes in behavior, practice, or decisions), or long-term (changes in condition of the natural resource). Examples of anticipated outcomes from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- An increased number of nonpoint source-impaired waterbodies that have been partially or fully restored to meet water quality standards or other established water quality-based goals;
- An increased number of waterbodies that are protected through development of restoration plans, watershed plans, or TMDLs for waters not meeting water quality standards;
- An increased awareness of watershed management principles or techniques that enhance the ability of practitioners and decision-makers to effect environmental change either directly or through institutional changes; and
- An increased awareness and utilization of water quality monitoring data/information to enable stakeholders to understand the magnitude of the problem, and to empower their ability to influence environmental change.

As part of the Statement of Work, an applicant will be required to describe how the project will result in the protection of water resources and link the outcomes to the Agency's Strategic Plan. Additional information regarding EPA's discussion of environmental results in terms of "outputs" and "outcomes" can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/awards/5700.7.pdf> or <http://www.epa.gov/water/waterplan/documents/FY06NPGappendix-b.pdf>.

II. Award Information

EPA expects approximately \$1,150,000 to be available under this announcement to fund approximately 10 to 24 projects. EPA anticipates that typical awards for the selected projects will range from \$20,000 to \$150,000, depending on the amount requested, the project topic area, and the overall size and need for the project. Except as specifically indicated for certain project topic areas in Section I.B, it is anticipated that the majority of the grants and cooperative agreements funded under this announcement will have one-year project periods. The project period for grants and cooperative agreements under this announcement should be no more than three years.

EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity to the competition and selection process.

EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement, or make fewer awards than anticipated. In addition, EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding

becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions.

The AWPPG program funds both grants and cooperative agreements. However, most projects in the past have been awarded as cooperative agreements. When cooperative agreements are awarded, EPA will have substantial involvement with the project workplan and budget. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicant in the performance of work supported by grant funds. Federal involvement for projects selected may include: close monitoring of the recipients performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work; review of proposed procurements; reviewing qualifications of key personnel (EPA does not have authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient); and/or review and comment on content of publications (printed or electronic) prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

States and local governments, Federally recognized Indian Tribes, territories and possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), interstate agencies or intertribal consortia, public or private non-profit, non-governmental institutions, and individuals. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

Interstate agencies and Intertribal consortia are eligible for funding under this competition. The term “interstate agency” is defined in CWA Section 502 as “an agency of two or more States established by or pursuant to an agreement or compact approved by the Congress, or any other agency of two or more States, having substantial powers or duties pertaining to the control of pollution as determined and approved by the Administrator.” Intertribal consortia must meet the requirements of 40 CFR Part 35.504.

Non-profit applicants may be asked to provide documentation that they meet the definition of a non-profit organization in OMB Circular A-122. Interstate agencies may be asked to provide a citation to the statutory authority, which establishes their status. Intertribal consortia may be asked to provide documentation that they meet the requirements of 40 CFR Part 35.504.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements

No cost share or match is required. However, projects with voluntary matching funding or in-kind contributions are encouraged and will be evaluated accordingly under the Section V.A “Project Leveraging” criterion. The match may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions and other non-cash support. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs and this value must be carefully documented. In the case

of salaries, applicants may use either minimum wage or fair market value. Match must be for allowable project costs. Matching funds are considered grant funds and are included in the total award amount and should be used for the reasonable and necessary expenses of carrying out the Statement of Work. All grant funds are subject to Federal audit. Any restrictions on the use of grant funds (examples of restrictions are outlined in Section VI.F of this announcement) also apply to the use of matching funds. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

These are requirements which if not met by the time of proposal submission will result in elimination of the proposal from consideration for funding. Only proposals that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of the announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. An applicant must meet the eligibility requirements in Section III.A of this announcement.
2. Proposals must be for projects that improve water quality by conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution. Demonstrations must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, and it is encouraged that the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not considered a demonstration project. Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement.
3. All projects must contribute to the overall development and improvement of watershed programs. Funds may not be used solely for the operational support of specific watershed projects, for the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for specific waterbodies, or for in-depth monitoring of individual waterbodies. Note: For project topic area I.B.1.b “Impaired Waters Recovery and Results Analysis,” EPA will not consider proposals for results analysis projects focused on a single impaired water’s recovery.
4. Applicants may submit more than one project proposal package (including Statement of Work, SF 424 and SF 424A) under this announcement. However, each proposal package must address only **one** specific project topic area (e.g., Assessment and TMDL Workshops, Newsletter for Volunteer Monitors, etc.) listed under any of the three national priorities listed in Section I.B. The cover page of each proposal package should clearly indicate the national priority and the specific project topic area addressed.

5. Except as stated below, proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or they will be rejected. In addition, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal and/or parts of the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
6. Proposals must be received by EPA or submitted electronically through Grants.gov on or before the submission closing date and time published in Section IV of this announcement. Proposals received after the published closing date and time will be returned to the sender without further consideration.

Proposals submitted by U.S. Postal Mail will not be considered. EPA will not accept faxed submissions.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Request for Application Packages

Grant application forms, including Standard Forms SF 424 and SF 424A, are available at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm and by mail upon request by calling the Grants Administration Division at (202) 564-5320.

B. Form of Application Submission

Applicants have the option to submit their proposals in *one* of two ways: 1) Electronically through the Grants.gov website or 2) hard copy and CD by express delivery service, hand delivery, or courier service to the EPA contact identified in Section VII. All proposals must be prepared, and include the information, as described in Section IV.C below, regardless of mode of submission.

1. Grants.gov Submission

Applicants who wish to submit their materials electronically through the Federal government's Grants.gov web site may do so. Grants.gov allows an applicant to download a proposal or application package template and complete the package offline based on agency instructions. After an applicant completes the required proposal or application package, it can submit the package electronically to Grants.gov, which transmits the package to the funding agency. Letters of support will need to be scanned so that they can be submitted electronically as part of the application package.

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on "Get Started," and then click on "For AORs" (Authorized Organization Representative) on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this grant program, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the "Apply for Grants" tab at the top of the page.

Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package and instructions for applying under this announcement using Grants.gov (https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html). You may retrieve the application package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OW-OWOW-06-5, or the CFDA number, in the space provided. Then complete and submit the application package as indicated. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How To Apply” at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the top of the page and then to go EPA opportunities).

Proposal materials submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically and must be submitted by the due date and time identified in Section IV.D of this announcement.

How to submit your proposal through Grants.gov:

Applicants are required to submit three documents to apply electronically through Grants.gov: the Statement of Work, SF 424, and SF 424A. All three documents should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For the Statement of Work portion, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your Statement of Work as described in Section IV.C of the announcement and save the document to your computer as an MS Word or PDF file. When you are ready to attach the Statement of Work to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your proposal narrative (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename,” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there are other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For the SF 424 and SF 424A, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action moves the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary.

Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – HQ-FY06 AWPPG – 1st Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – HQ – FY06 AWPPG – 2nd Submission.” Once your application package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 800-518-4726 or e-mail at support@grants.gov, or contact Tim Icke by phone at 202-566-1211 or e-mail at awppg@epa.gov. If you have any other technical difficulties while applying electronically, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/CustomerSupport>.

2. Hard Copy and Compact Disc (CD) Submission

Two hard copies of the complete proposal package, as described in IV.C below, and an electronic version on a CD are required to be sent by express mail, courier service, or hand delivered. **Proposals submitted by U.S. Postal Mail will not be considered. EPA will not accept faxed submissions.** Electronic submissions may be in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf) or Microsoft Word (.doc). Letters of support will need to be scanned on the CD so that they can be submitted as part of the application package.

C. Content of Application Submission

The Statement of Work section must be limited to no more than nine (9) typewritten pages (a page is one side of a piece of paper). Additional pages will not be considered. Supporting materials (such as annotated resumes, SF 424 and SF 424A, and support letters) are not included in the nine (9) page limit. Pages should be numbered for ease of reading. All proposal packages, regardless of how submitted, must include the following documents:

- 1) Complete Statement of Work as described below.
- 2) Signed SF 424 and SF 424A.

Statement of Work Outline

Statement of Work narratives should be typewritten and must include the information listed below. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this.

1. Cover Page including:
 - a. Project title;
 - b. Project topic area from Section I.B addressed in the proposal;
 - c. Name of applicant;
 - d. Key personnel and contact information (i.e., e-mail address and phone number);
 - e. Geographic location (i.e., the name of the watershed along with the designated 8-digit Hydrologic Unit Code(s) (HUCs)) if the proposal is a placed-based project; and
 - f. Total project cost and dollars requested.
2. Abstract/project summary (recommended 75 words or less). Brief description of the proposed project.
3. Project description containing:
 - a. Brief description of environmental issue(s) of concern (need for the project);
 - b. Project Goals and Objectives:
 - i. Stated Objective/Link to EPA Strategic Plan - List the Objective of the Program/project and provide a link to the EPA Strategic Plan, Goal 2 (See Section I of this announcement) for each objective.
 - ii. Results of Activities (Outputs) - List the products/results which are expected to be achieved from accomplishment of the workplan activities and an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project output(s) (examples of outputs can be found in Section I of this announcement).
 - iii. Projected Environmental Improvement (Outcome) - List what environmental improvements will be accomplished as a result of this program/project. These improvements are changes or benefits to the environment which result from the accomplishment of Statement of Work commitments and outputs. Describe your approach for tracking progress toward achieving anticipated outcome(s) of the project (examples of outcomes can be found in Section I of this announcement).
 - iv. Established Baseline for Measurement - Describe what baseline will be used to determine whether the program/project resulted in environmental improvement (i.e., current condition, new condition).
 - v. Environmental Results Past Performance - Briefly describe the Federally funded assistance agreements that your organization performed within the last three years and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (i.e., outputs and outcomes)

under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V.

- c. Project Tasks (outline the steps you will take to meet the project goals).
- d. Schedule (describe when you expect to complete significant steps and milestones).
- e. Describe how the proposal will address:
 - i. The project topic area identified in Section I.B of this announcement (**Applicants must address only one specific project topic area per complete proposal package**);
 - ii. State, local, and/or other stakeholder participation (partnerships);
 - iii. How the proposal addresses the need to solve an important environmental problem in a watershed, and/or reflects State/Federal environmental priorities and goals;
 - iv. Opportunities for leveraging other sources of funding. Describe (i) how the applicant will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) how EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for voluntary matches or cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority; and
 - v. Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) issues (if the applicant expects to collect data and information).
- f. Brief description of staffing and funding resources available to implement the proposed project including the number of workers and staff qualifications (annotated resumes are preferred but not necessary and will not be included in the page limit).
- g. Brief description of the applicant's organization and experience related to the proposed project topic area, and the organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project.
- h. Brief description of how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to States, Tribes, local governments, watershed practitioners, and the general public.

4. A budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task. This section provides an opportunity for narrative description of the budget or aspects of the budget found in the SF 424A such as “other” and “contractual”. Total costs should include both Federal and matching (non-Federal) components (if applicable).
5. Briefly describe other Federally and/or non-Federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V.
6. Any support letters should specifically indicate how the supporting organization will assist in the project (not counted in page limit).

The Statement of Work should also provide any additional information, to the extent not already covered by above, necessary to evaluate the applicant under the criteria in Section V.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Proposal submissions sent by hard copy with CD must be **received** by the Agency Contact identified in Section VII by **5:30 P.M. EDT Tuesday, August 15, 2006**. Proposals submitted electronically through Grants.gov must be submitted by **11:59 P.M. EDT Tuesday, August 15, 2006**. Late proposals will not be considered for funding. Questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified in Section VII before **Friday, August 4, 2006** and written responses will be posted on EPA’s website at:

E. Intergovernmental Review

If selected for award, applicants must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Section 204, Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. Applicants should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her State for more information on the process the State requires to be followed in applying for assistance if the State has selected the program for review. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your application is selected for funding.

F. Confidential Business Information

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate

confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

V. Application Review Information

A. Selection Criteria

All eligible proposals, based on the Section III threshold eligibility review, will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria and weights below (100 total point scale). Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly each criterion and/or sub-criterion is addressed in the proposal package.

1) National Priorities/Specific Project Areas (20 points)	<p>Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposed project addresses one of the project topic areas identified in Section I.B of the announcement.</p> <p><i>Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly the priority topic area is addressed in the Statement of Work.</i></p>
2) Environmental Results (20 points)	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on each of these sub-criterion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates potential environmental results (i.e., will the project result in the protection of water resources), anticipated outputs and outcomes, and how the outcomes are linked to EPA's Strategic Plan. (10 points) (ii) Extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates a sound plan for measuring progress toward achieving the expected outcomes and outputs (examples of outcomes and outputs can be found in Section I of this announcement). (5 points) (iii) The extent and quality to which the applicant adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under Federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. (5 points) <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under (iii) above, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including Agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor of 2.5 points.</p>

<p>3) Specific Workplan Elements (20 points)</p>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the following sub-criterion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) schedule or timeline of activities for the project. (5 points) (ii) the reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task. Total costs must include both Federal and any voluntary matching (non-Federal) components (if applicable). Describe cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of costs. (5 points) (iii) A description of roles and responsibilities of the recipient and major partners in carrying out the workplan commitments. (5 points) (iv) A description of how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to States, Tribes, local governments, watershed practitioners, and the public. (5 points)
<p>4) Project Leveraging (10 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) How they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project and/or how EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority. (10 points)
<p>5) Environmental Significance (10 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates relevance to solving an important environmental problem in a watershed and/or reflects State/Federal environmental priorities and goals.</p>

<p>6) Programmatic Capability/Past Performance (Technical Experience)/Qualifications and Experience (20 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Past performance in successfully completing Federally and/or non-Federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project within the last three years. (5 points) (ii) History of meeting reporting requirements on assistance agreements with Federal and/or non-Federal organizations within the last three years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under these agreements. (5 points) (iii) Organizational experience related to the proposed project topic area and infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project. (5 points) (iv) Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. (5 points) <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under (i) and (ii) above, the Agency will consider the information supplied by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including Agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance information or reporting history will receive neutral scores for these factors (i.e., 2.5 points for item (i) and 2.5 points for item (ii)).</p>
---	--

B. Review and Selection Process

All proposals received by EPA or submitted electronically through Grants.gov by the submission deadline will first be screened by EPA staff against the threshold criteria in Section III of the announcement. Proposals that do not pass the threshold review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.

A panel of EPA staff will review eligible proposals based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section V.A and will develop a list of the most highly rated proposals to submit to the Selection Official. Final funding decisions will then be made by the Selection Official based on the evaluations conducted by the review panel and may also take into account factors such as geographic distribution of funds and diversity of projects.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

All applicants, including those who are not selected for funding, will be notified by e-mail. Successful applicant(s) will be invited to submit a complete application package prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10) that will be due 21 calendar days after being notified. Required forms and instructions for preparing and submitting the completed application will be provided at that time.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and Statement of Work prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1. An approvable final Statement of Work is required to include:

1. Components to be funded under the assistance agreement;
2. Estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each component;
3. Commitments for each component and a timeframe for their accomplishment;
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting schedule; and
5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA (for cooperative agreements only) in carrying out the commitments.

In addition, successful applicants will be required to certify that they have not been Debarred or Suspended from participation in Federal assistance awards in accordance with 40 CFR Part 32.

A listing of selected projects will be posted on EPA Headquarters Assessment and Watershed Protection Division website address (<http://www.epa.gov/owow/awpd>) once the awards have been made. This website will also contain information about this announcement including information concerning deadline extensions or other modifications (www.grants.gov will also contain information on any modifications to the announcement).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The general award and administration process for all AWPPGs is governed by regulations at 40 CFR Part 30 (“Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements to Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-profit Organizations”) and 40 CFR Part 31 (“Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”).

DUNS Number

Applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number with the full application for Federal grants or cooperative agreements. Organizations can receive a DUNS number in one day, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

C. Reporting

Project monitoring and reporting requirements can be found in 40 CFR Part 30.50-30.52, 40 CFR Part 31.40-31.41. In general, recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the grant or cooperative agreement to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved. Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The format for these reports will be identified during the grant application time frame, and will include reporting on established performance measures indicated in the project description (*i.e.*, goals, outputs, and outcomes). The final report is due 90 days after the assistance agreement has expired.

D. Dispute Process

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>.

E. Administrative Capability Requirement

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 - Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

F. Funding Restrictions

- Award recipients may award contracts in accordance with 40 CFR 31.36, and subgrants in accordance with 40 CFR 31.37. The applicant must not simply pass through funding to an organization that is not eligible to receive funding directly.
- While contractual efforts can be a part of these grants, each AWPPG recipient must be significantly involved in the administration of the grant. EPA recommends that recipients use no more than 50 percent of the grant funds to contract with other entities. If the contractual work is being done by another non-governmental institution, interstate agency, or intertribal consortia, these entities must be clearly indicated in the proposal.
- Funds cannot be used for land acquisition or purchase of easements. However, they may support the coordination or acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and study efforts directed at identifying areas for acquisition, which would help address water pollution problems.
- Purchase or lease of vehicles (including boats, motor homes) and office furniture is not eligible for funding under this program.

- Funds cannot be used to pay for travel by Federal agency staff.
- Under the competition, each proposed project must be able to be completed within the project period and with the initial award of funds. Recipients should not anticipate additional funding beyond the initial award of funds for a specific project. Eligible applicants should request the entire amount of money needed to complete the project in the original proposal.
- Funds cannot be used to support an honorarium under this competition.
- Proposed project activities must also comply with all State and Federal regulations applicable to the project area. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

G. Geospatial Information

Grants awarded under this announcement may involve Geospatial Information. Geospatial data generally means information that identifies, depicts, or describes the geographic locations, boundaries, or characteristics of inhabitants and natural or constructed features on the Earth. This includes such information derived from, among other sources, socio-demographic analysis, economic analysis, land information records and land use information processing, statistical analysis, survey and observational methodologies, environmental analysis, critical infrastructure protection, satellites, remote sensing, airborne imagery collection, mapping, engineering, construction, global positioning systems, and surveying technologies and activities. It also includes individual point or site-specific data that are referenced to a location on the Earth and digital aerial imagery of the Earth.

This information may be derived from, among other things, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS), remote sensing, mapping, charting, and surveying technologies, or statistical data. For purposes of EPA grants, this refers to geographically based information or data or the tools, applications or hardware that allow one to collect, manage, analyze, store, or distribute data in a geographic manner.

VII. Agency Contact

Note to Applicants: EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. Questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified below before **Friday, August 4, 2006** and written responses will be posted on EPA's website at: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/funding/rfp.html>. In accordance with EPA's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants or discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals.

Agency Contact:

Tim Icke

Phone: (202) 566-1211

E-mail: awppg@epa.gov

Address for Hard Copy Submissions:

US EPA Assessment and Watershed Protection Division
Attention: Tim Icke, AWPPG Submission
EPA West Building
1301 Constitution Ave., NW
Room 7313E
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: (202) 566-1211

VIII. Other Information**A. *Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) and STORET***

Certain quality assurance and/or quality control (QA/QC) and peer review requirements are applicable to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or condition; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data also include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and obtained from other sources such as data bases or published literature. Regulations pertaining to QA/QC requirements can be found in 40 CFR Parts 30.54 and 31.45. Additional guidance can be found at http://www.epa.gov/quality/qa_docs.html#noeparqt.

Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process in their proposed projects. If your organization does not have a Quality Management System in place, one must be developed. A project specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) must be submitted and approved by EPA. Allow four to six months in your timeline for approval of these plans.

Additionally, recipients of assistance agreements for water monitoring projects will be encouraged to submit all data from monitoring activities to EPA's central data warehouse, the "STORET" (short for STORage and RETrieval) database. STORET provides an accessible, nationwide central repository of water information of known quality. Recipient submission of monitoring data into STORET or monitoring data made available in the Advisory Council for Water Information (ACWI) Core Monitoring Data Element Standard (or Data Exchange Template) will facilitate exchange of monitoring data between EPA and its partners. Information on STORET is at <http://www.epa.gov/storet> and information on the standard is at <http://www.epa.gov/edr>.

B. *Data Sharing*

All recipients of assistance agreements under this announcement will be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final narrative statement.

C. *Copyrights*

EPA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes in accordance with 40 CFR 31.34: (a) the copyright in any work developed under a grant,

subgrant, or contract under a grant or subgrant; and (b) any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.